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# USDA Inside USDA Information

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BYE, BYE JAN.,  
HELLO FEB.

We thought January would never end, but here we go with February and reports of training, some more Kerns from Bob Kern, a bit of talk about rewards and offices, some moves and job announcements. Before we're through there might even be some ideas you can use.

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TRAINING THAT CLICKED Reports on what you--and we--are doing come from everywhere. Latest came from Larry Quinn, GPA, who ran into a story about a public information course for employees in "Training" magazine, written by Claude D. Crowley, head of the field information staff at Ft. Worth, Texas, for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

Claude's story describes SCS courses since 1976 that do more than merely emphasize one narrow information specialty. Instead, the courses have five goals...to train participants in inf planning, to sharpen skills participants already have to some degree, to teach new skills, to introduce participants to new equipment and techniques and to motivate participants to use inf techniques to make their work more effective.

Most interest came from the production of a daily newspaper by the trainees themselves. For a complete rundown on the program, see the December 1979 issue of "Training."

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MORE NPAC II  
BACKGROUND

As travel budgets feel the crunch of increased transportation costs plus the energy shortage, personal contacts also diminish. Bob Kern, GPA, in looking around for needed areas of work for a second NPAC project notes that some of those shortages can be provided through effective use of instructional communication.

Apparently there's no shortage of research on instructional media...only a shortage of the kind of research that would be most helpful. Bob says we might label this type of instruction "distance learning." Since specialists and program people probably won't be able to design and produce materials for such approaches, Bob figures it's a communication specialization that has potentials.

Another area of research Bob has dug into deals with mass communication or mass media. He says that while searches continue for a theory of mass communication, none has yet won adoption. Recent emphasis in studies represents audience needs and interests, broadening the orientation from an earlier view of source as



dominant. And there's still much about the power or lack of power by the media to influence behavior. Obviously all of us could benefit from an NPAC II if it only collected, abstracted and accessed such studies for us all. Bob says there's more to be learned in this area than we might have imagined...just in keeping up-to-date.

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#### ABOUT SALARIES...

Not long ago a survey (apparently in 1979) commissioned by the National Conference of Editorial Writers for the Bureau of Media Research at Indiana University showed that the median salary of daily newspaper editorial writers is \$24,174. That compared to a 1971 survey that showed writers earned \$16,751.

The International Association of Business Communicators also did a study in 1979 of its membership...got 54.8% response. Findings showed that 33.9% were under age 30, 38.1% were from 30-39; the rest were older. More than 39.4% had been with their organization 2 years or less. Highest numbers--33.1%--were in the salary bracket of \$20,000 to \$29,000. Most had only a bachelor's degree--64.5% and that was in journalism (39.7%). As to experience, the largest group (25.6%) had 2 years or less.

We're still working on a more complete assessment, but findings from 45 states (including D.C. and Puerto Rico) show that the average extension information specialist salary is \$17,877. That's a 1980 Science and Education Administration (SEA) average, based on 495 inf specialists who have an average of 13 years service.

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#### ON THE MOVE...

Some of you have heard...others haven't...that the offices of the National 4-H Council will be consolidated and headquartered at the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C., effective Feb. 1. Offices of the President and the National 4-H Supply Service will remain in Chicago.

The Communications Division, headed by James T. Veeder will include all publications, information and corporate relations functions but subscription fulfillment for "National 4-H News" will continue to be handled out of Chicago. Larry L. Krug, associate director of communications will be primarily responsible for educational aids, "National 4-H News," promotion and reference and reporting. Margo H. Tyler will serve as assistant director for media relations and program publications.

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#### ...PLUS CONGRATS

By the way, we note that the 4-H Council's 1978 annual report got a gold ribbon in the 1979 Annual Association Trends contest. Judges considered more than 1,000 entries.

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#### LESS PAPER, WE HOPE

Believe it or not, one goal GPA has is to produce fewer but better press releases. So, in 1979, there was a reduction of almost 16%...from 3531 in 1978 to 2967 in 1979. We insist that all those always were news only, but we're also still working on the situation!

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OUT-OF-TOWN VISITORS

Visitors last week included Harold Bryson, Dallas regional inf office, and Herb Jackson, Chicago regional inf office. Both were attending meetings of the federal regional representatives and sat in on a press briefing Saturday about the USDA budget.

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AWARDS FOR JETER

We note that Frank Jeter, SCS inf rep in Raleigh, N.C., is back on the job after recuperation from a heart attack he had last November. Frank recently received an award as "Outstanding SCS Employee for 1979" from the N.C. Assoc. of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Then the N.C. Chapter of the Soil Conservation Society of America gave him the "Professional Achievement Award for 1979" for media coverage of conservation work. (Congrats, Frank!)

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LATE WORD ON  
STRUCTURES COVERAGE

Idahoans Scott Fedale and Glenn Holloway videotaped some of the public structures meeting in Spokane Dec. 12 and all of Secretary Bergland's press conference for KWSU TV use. Then they bailed out KXLY of Spokane because the station's coverage got messed up with cable problems.

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YEP, IT WAS DON  
ALL RIGHT

Some folks around here who went to see a special Brazilian videotape production at the Kennedy Center were surprised to see Don Elder, GPA, ramroding everything. Don is producer of USDA's weekly "A Better Way" and (5 per week) "Down to Earth" TV programs.

Reason Don was playing around with the high rollers at the Kennedy Center is that he's a board member of the Washington chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. The program he staged was a presentation of an award winning production by Rede Globo, the dominant TV network in Brazil, whose productions, all produced on videotape, are seen regularly in 52 countries.

The screening was preceded by a reception featuring Brazilian beverages and snacks...more than 200 NATAS members and guests attended.

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DESIGNERS ELECT SUTTON

David Sutton, GPA, has been elected president of the Federal Design Council for 1980. Other officers are from other departments or agencies of government.

Dave says the group this year will explore the status of design and the directions to take at the beginning of a new decade... planning programs on typography and related technology, typeface design, language, image and new architecture. Some programs will be held with other professional organizations.

Theme for the Council in 1980 is "Energizing Form." First program will be 6:30 p.m., Feb. 11, in the Pension Bldg. (440 G St., N.W.). It will be a slide lecture on the history of design from the Bauhaus to the beginning of the Federal Design Improvement Program...title is "The Great Design Migration," and will be presented by Keith Godard of the design firm of WORKS, New York. (Oh yes, Dave hasn't forgotten the USDA design manual...it's just delayed and should be ready in a few weeks.)

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JACK'S STILL JAZZY

When Jack Towers handled the radio group at USDA--the spot Jim Johnson of GPA holds--chances were pretty good that you could always stir up a great discussion if you mentioned jazz to Jack. Now, in retirement, all that interest seems to be paying off.

Folks hereabouts who read the Jan. 22 "Washington Post" story about the recordings program at the Smithsonian were pleased to learn of Jack's part in the operation. He's the primary recording engineer...has a home basement studio where he and Smithsonian experts go over old scratchy records, editing and remastering them onto tape.

If you've bought any of the Smithsonian records--about jazz especially--maybe you've noticed that Jack gets a heavy byline.

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FOR THE ORIGINATOR,  
WHY NOT?

R. Lyle Webster, retired Director of Information, writes from Hawaii that he wants a copy of "Fact Book of Agriculture." Since he is the guy who started that publication, we reckon we should send him one.

Lyle says "hello to any there who remember me--can't be many. Had a nice lunch with Hadley Read recently as he paused, enroute to the Philippines."

In case any of you who do remember Lyle (and we know there are plenty) want to write him, his address is 999 Wilder Ave., Apt. 1102, Honolulu 96822.

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WINTER BOTHERING YOU?  
TRY ARIZONA

On the job front, Lorraine Kingdon, now coordinator of ag comm at the U. of Arizona, says she's recruiting for a publications editor...to plan, edit and direct printing of popular and technical pubs for the college of agriculture there. A bachelor's is required with 4 years publications editing experience.

If interested, write Charles Martin, 303H Ag Bldg., U. of Arizona, Tucson 85721. Deadline is March 8.

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OR TRY REA IN D.C.

The Rural Electrification Administration is hunting for a GS-14 public information officer to be chief of its current information branch. Required are 6 years experience such as establishing and maintaining effective relations with public inf and comm media; obtaining and interpreting inf for reps of the media; organizing and conducting a program to disseminate inf and evaluating the style, manner of presentation and effect of written and visual materials.

Contact: Fred L. Henson, (202) 447-3577 at Room 4072, South Bldg., USDA, REA, Washington 20250. Inquire about announcement No. REA 80-13.

